United Nations

EP

Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.17/12/Add.1
20 March 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Seventeenth session
Nairobi, 10-21 May 1993

ITEM 6 (a):* COORDINATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

1992 REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION (ACC) TO THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL

Addendum

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SYSTEM-WIDE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION IN THE FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present report contains proposals by the Executive Director for new arrangements for coordination and cooperation in the field of the environment in response to the new inter-agency arrangements evolving in the United Nations system as a result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the streamlining of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) subsidiary structure initiated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The outline responds to the continuing coordinating requirements in the field of the environment as stipulated in General Assembly resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 32/197 of 20 December 1977.

---

* Refers to the number of the item on the Provisional Agenda (UNEP/GC.17/1).

Na. 93-0209 260393 260393

/...

Suggested Action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to,

Take note of the outline proposed by the Executive Director for new arrangements for coordination in the field of the environment;

Endorse the course of action outlined in order to enable the Executive Director to discharge effectively the coordinating role required of UNEP by various legislative authorities.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SYSTEM-WIDE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION IN THE FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. The outcome of UNCED and the adopted Agenda 21 have necessitated a system-wide reappraisal of established structures for inter-agency cooperation and coordination. To that end an ACC Task Force was established at the first regular session of the ACC for 1992. The Task Force comprised the Executive Heads of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Chairman), the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) UNEP and the World Bank, with the UNCED Secretariat participating on an *exofficio* basis.

2. The report of the ACC Task Force was presented to the ACC at its second regular session for 1992, at which the ACC endorsed the report. In considering issues related to arrangements for cooperation and coordination through the ACC and its subsidiary machinery, the Task Force, in its report, endorsed the role of the ACC as the "high-level inter-agency coordination mechanism" called for in Agenda 21 (paragraph 38.17).

3. At the intermediate level, the ACC established an Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), with the broad responsibility to identify major policy issues relating to the follow-up of UNCED by the United Nations system and advise the ACC on ways and means of addressing them so as to ensure effective cooperation and coordination of the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21. A core membership of the IACSD was designated to include the members of the ACC Task Force as well as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The IACSD is to be serviced by the newly established Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, and chaired by the head of the Department.

/...

4. In making its recommendations for inter-agency coordination in the follow-up to UNCED, the Task Force took note of the experience of the Designated Officials for Environmental Matters (DOEM) and the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment (CIDIE), recalled the responsibility entrusted to the ACC for system-wide coordination in the field of the environment and recognized that there were a certain number of well-defined environmental issues in which UNEP could play a leadership role, as clearly indicated in Agenda 21 (paragraphs 38.21 and 22).

5. In light of the foregoing, the Task Force considered that the time had come for UNEP and other organizations involved to reassess the DOEM's functional linkages with the ACC and its subsidiary machinery. The report of the Task Force goes on to state: "To this effect the Task Force recommends that the ACC invite the Executive Director of UNEP to submit specific proposals on system-wide cooperation and coordination in the field of environment, after seeking the advice of the DOEM. Such a proposal should aim at enabling the ACC to discharge more effectively its responsibility for coordination in the field of environment, as stipulated in GA resolution 2997 (XXVII) and 32/197".

6. Having re-examined the role of the existing coordinating structure in the field of the environment particularly in the light of Agenda 21 and the report of the ACC Task Force, the Executive Director is making the following proposals:

(a) Given the continuing need for inter-agency coordination in the field of the environment and the renewed and enhanced mandate provided to UNEP by Agenda 21, the Executive Director proposes that the ACC should remain the central body responsible for coordination in the field of the environment as envisaged in General Assembly resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 32/197 of 20 December 1977;

(b) The Executive Director is in the process of developing more detailed and specific system-wide arrangements to assist the ACC in the discharge of its coordinating function. In this connection, the Executive Director plans to inform the ACC, at its April 1993 session, of the establishment of an Inter-Agency Environment Coordination Group (IAEG), together with an appropriate substructure, as a possible successor arrangement to the current DOEM. The IAEG would become the principal system-wide forum for inter-agency cooperation and coordination in the field of the environment under the ACC. The IAEG would consider environmental policy issues under the guidance of and within the policy framework of the ACC and take actions, as appropriate. The IAEG would meet under the chairmanship of the Executive Director of UNEP and membership would comprise senior officials of member and participant institutions of the ACC;

(c) The IAEG would be supported at the working level by a system of focal points who would meet on a thematic basis or to consider a cluster of subjects in order to undertake thematic joint planning and programming. This would be a flexible arrangement, involving agencies/organizations with a major contribution to make and would have provision for lead agencies to take responsibility on a thematic basis;

(d) In discharging its responsibilities as the central body responsible for coordination in the field of the environment, it is proposed that the ACC continue to report to the Governing Council according to the guidelines which the Council has been requested to provide (UNEP GC.17/12/Add.2). The ACC would be assisted in the preparation of its reports by the IAEG.